

## Annex 8c – Level of Engagement Tool

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### How to use this Guidance?

This guidance is the result of work by the PPA Team, Design & Impact Advisers and external consultants. This particular tool has only been tested to a limited extent in the field to date, and therefore it is vital that there is more consultation, testing and feedback by programme teams to inform further revisions of the tool/guidance to fit purpose. It is therefore not intended that this is a final end-product: the intention is that teams take this guidance and core tool and feedback as to its usefulness or not in the programme context, towards further iterations/amendments as necessary. As is outlined in the later section on ‘moulding at the programme level’, it is to be encouraged that teams will take the generic tool and tailor it to reflect their specific programme and policy/practice context.

### Where to use this Tool?

This tool is to be used for reporting to the following indicator in the PPA portfolio log-frame (and thus any programme-level indicators ‘feeding into’ this over-arching portfolio indicator, where relevant and logical to do so):-

- **Outcome 2, Indicator 1** – ‘Level of engagement of civil society groups with relevant government authorities and/or other decision-makers to advocate for adaptation, REDD+ and low carbon development policy frameworks and practices that are climate smart, environmentally sustainable and designed to improve the well-being of poor men and women<sup>1</sup>.

### How to use this Tool?

Much of WWF’s work involves engaging with and influencing of government departments, private sector organisations, lending companies etc. to transform their policies and practices<sup>2</sup>. Specific to the PPA<sup>3</sup> is an interest in improving the pro-poor, sustainability (environmental and social) and climate resilience aspects of these policies and practices (where appropriate, logical and practical) in order to achieve our desired impact. This involves either for example developing policies, standards, guidelines or practices (captured under the broad term of policies and practices) where they don’t exist, or significantly improving/upgrading them to better reflect what WWF (and DFID) perceives to be ‘good’ practice/standards.

This tool looks at tracking the first step in this influencing process, in terms of the level of engagement by WWF/partners and/or key associated organisations (e.g. local CSOs/CBOs that WWF/partners are associated with or support in some way) with key decision-makers and other targeted actors/organisations in terms of initiating the process

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<sup>1</sup> This is the portfolio indicators as it stands at the time of drafting this guidance. It is important to note that the PPA Team is currently considering refining/simplifying the portfolio indicators further; therefore the indicator description in the future may vary from that outlined here.

<sup>2</sup> For the purposes of this guidance, the definition of policy and practice is taken from the PPA Portfolio log-frame: ‘Policy is a document with official endorsement. Practice is an externally recognised way of working defined by the strategic approach’.

<sup>3</sup> PPA = Programme Partnership Arrangement – a funding and performance partnership with the UK Department for International Development (DFID/UKAid)

(e.g. raising the profile of a particular policy/practice issue or need; starting dialogue in the public and political domain on key issues). The basis of the tool is tracking specific 'inputs' and 'outputs' to this engagement which would likely be evident at different levels/stages in the engagement process. Once Level 4 of Engagement is reached, the subsequent influencing process would then be tracked and followed using the Commitment and Action Tool (see separate guidance notes) and other supporting evidence. Dependent on the particular policy/practice and country context, Engagement Level 4 may at times be equivalent to Level 0 or 1 on the Commitment and Action Tool Scale. This degree of overlap/merging is to be expected, as both tools are to be used to monitor aspects of the overall policy/practice influencing process, which is by its nature complex and non-linear. These tools together provide a means of analysing, tracking and evaluating the overall policy/practice influencing process.

Definition of 'Engagement' in the PPA Context:

The extent to which WWF/partners (and/or associated or supported CBOs/CSOs) are able to raise the profile of a particular policy/practice issue (i.e. with a view to improving 'good practice' aspects in terms of being more environmentally sustainable, climate-smart and pro-poor), through a process which leads ultimately to more regular and focussed dialogue with key targeted actors/organisations. At the minimum, the end-point would be to have a meeting or dialogue firmly planned to take place in the near future.

**In simple terms: 'getting people's attention and getting the issue on the table towards future commitment/action'.**

## Setting the Context

The context or 'background' required for utilisation of the Level of Engagement Tool is exactly the same as that for the Commitment and Action Tool, as both tools as already stated are involved at different points to measure the same overall influencing process.

### **'Defining the Problem' - Determination and Qualitative Analysis of Policy/Practice Aims**

A key precursor to using this tool (and indeed for all influencing/advocacy work in general), if not carried out already, is qualitative analysis of the policy/practice goals being aimed for (i.e. what is the standard of policy/practice at present regarding environmental sustainability, climate-smart and pro-poor aspects? How can this be improved? What particularly are we aiming for? What are the key steps to achieve this? How will we assess that qualitative standards have been met during the influencing process (i.e. at key milestones?)). Use of techniques such as problem and solution trees, and scenario and change forecasting may be of assistance here. If not already undertaken, this should hopefully serve as a useful exercise in evaluating existing influencing/advocacy aims and strategies. There may already be other organisations (e.g. think tanks, academic organisations) who have undertaken analytical work in this area that WWF/partners could link with, or existing evaluations of the current policy/practice impact that could be drawn from.

Qualitative aspects of policy/practice should be then be monitored and evaluated regularly throughout programme implementation. It may well be that WWF could partner with other organisations as indicated above in order to monitor policy/practice development and change, and to thus inform and re-orientate their strategy/aims.

## **Defining and Measuring the Poverty Outcomes and Impact of Influencing Work**

This is an area which requires much thought, analysis and innovation. WWF have stated their commitment to poverty reduction and to determining and addressing the links between poverty and environmental management/protection, direct and indirect, which underpin all activities and outcomes.

At the start of a programme or 'engagement process', it is thus vital to undertake some form of consultation with local or regional stakeholders and beneficiaries (e.g. focus groups in particular communities where conducting research on a particular management regime; surveys or public meetings in areas likely to be affected by a policy/practice change proposed) to ascertain views on and hence adjust WWF/partners' position on key issues (e.g. how will the change in law or regulation being lobbied for affect those particular communities, and within that how will it affect particularly vulnerable groups and individuals within that community? (E.g. could have household interviews, focus groups, etc. to focus on particular groups such as female-headed households and people living with HIV/AIDS, etc.)). This is a means of assuring that WWF/partners are operating under a strategy where the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable groups/individuals are integrated and represented. For example, it may be appropriate for WWF to have as part of our strategy to engage with the PRSP process in-country, in terms of ensuring that particular poverty-environment links and issues are identified and planned for within associated policies and plans.

Subsequent consultations on progress and outcomes (e.g. participative 'social mapping' of how different groups and sections of community are being affected or benefiting) should then be conducted both throughout the programme (to monitor social/poverty outcomes; to assess any changes in behaviour, opinion or awareness at the community/local/regional level as a result of policy/practice change or progress; to adjust strategies/plans accordingly), and also some time after completion to assess impact. Such on-going consultations should also be used as one means of keeping intended beneficiaries informed and aware of WWF/partner activities and progress on their behalf. It may be that there are already organisations working with the communities, groups or populations involved (e.g. social research institutes; Think Tanks; development NGOs; government survey and research departments), and in order to maximise resources and results it would make sense to explore collaboration with such organisations to share research and data towards refining aims and strategies, and subsequently to set baselines and monitor progress.

Depending on the outcome of such analysis and research, it may be deemed appropriate to disaggregate data collected through programme monitoring in order to track outcomes and impacts for particular poor, vulnerable or socially excluded groups identified (e.g. ethnic minorities; disabled; elderly).

As well as consultation, representation for communities and particular groups could be sought for key WWF/partner planning sessions, meetings and monitoring events. For example this could be a local or regional CSO/CBO that has particularly strong links with the communities, group or population concerned. If particular sub-groups are deemed to be affected (either positively or negatively) by a policy/practice change, then it may be appropriate to have user or community group leaders on board on a regular basis to represent the group's views and needs. The ideal situation would be to have a diversity of stakeholders and beneficiaries represented at key planning, monitoring and evaluation meetings. Some level of direct consultation and research must be done prior to and alongside this however, as it must be ensured that such organisations and leaders do truly represent the needs and views of all members (e.g. in some societies women may attend user group meetings do not feel free to express their true opinions).

Where the programme is working on a more national or international basis, and links with particular communities or groups are less tangible, techniques such as random sample surveys, perception and satisfaction surveys (e.g. 'life satisfaction' surveys as an indicator of well-being impacts) could be considered. In this case establishing a network of organisations that represent particular groups' needs and concerns at a national level is essential. This network should be closely involved in planning, monitoring and evaluation of programme activities.

Once regular consultation and representation is established, this can then support and validate evaluation of progress, and could for example provide the basis for case studies to demonstrate eventual impact of policy/practice changes for key beneficiaries 'on the ground'. Communities or local groups may also as a result become involved in active monitoring of activities and outcomes on a regular basis.

All of the above may require investment in terms of training and capacity-building for relevant staff in terms of poverty awareness, analysis and participatory techniques.

### **'Designing the Strategy' - Undertaking a Stakeholder/Influencing 'Mapping' Exercise**

The follow-on step from the above qualitative analysis, again if not done already, is an initial stakeholder/influencing 'mapping' exercise (involving all team, partners, stakeholders and beneficiaries where relevant and possible) to assess the key actors/organisations to be targeted to influence a particular policy/practice outcome and 'how' (the strategy). Again, if this has not been undertaken already, this exercise should be helpful in terms of refining and revisiting strategic approaches to (and indeed progress in) advocacy/influencing work. In this sense this task should hopefully be a useful management and learning exercise and not simply an added burden.

Once this 'context' has been defined, the Level of Engagement tool can then be used to first of all evaluate the starting-point (or 'baseline') of the influencing progress, and then to assess progress in the first phase of the influencing process in terms of initial or continuing engagement with targeted actors/institutions (e.g. greater public awareness on issue? Issue referred to during key meetings/speeches or in media?).

### **A Participatory Tool**

The ideal way of using this tool would be, as with the Commitment and Action Tool, to use it as a guide for a participative evaluation of the baseline and subsequently programme progress against the key portfolio (or programme-relevant) indicator/s outlined earlier. Over the course of the programme, evidence should be gathered regarding key milestones/achievements in the influencing process linked to key target actors/organisations.

Team members and key partners/stakeholders should review the evidence available and then a meeting/s or workshop should be held to discuss findings and agree on an appropriate level of engagement to reflect the baseline or progress to-date. If partners (and other stakeholders where relevant/appropriate) are not involved at this stage, then at a minimum anecdotal evidence should be sought from them to substantiate and validate the level assigned.

The output of such a meeting would be the level of engagement (by WWF, key partners or associated/supported CBOs/CSOs) with key targeted actors. However, it is also useful to record the reasoning and process behind assigning the level (e.g. particularly important points to note are: to be clear what particular targeted actors/organisations the level/s refer to; key inputs, outputs and general activities/events which led to and define the level

assigned). This 'record' (e.g. in the form of a summary table with a heading of key targeted actors/organisations, and brief list of key inputs, outputs, etc. that correspond to the level assigned) should be stored for future evaluation purposes, and also where relevant provided as a monitoring report annex.

This 'participative scoring' would be done on a bi-annual or annual basis in line with PPA reporting periods. However, it may be useful for programmes to consider using the tool to keep a more regular 'check' on influencing progress, in terms of assisting with 'adaptive management' of such policy/practice influencing work.

### **An 'Evidence-based' Tool**

The tool, again as with the Commitment and Action Tool, must draw on an evidence base to inform the assignment of levels as highlighted previously. This evidence, as far as is practical and possible, must be gathered from the start of the programme period (in terms of setting the 'baseline') and throughout (in terms of regular monitoring so that progress against milestones/targets can be assessed). Previous work on 'Monitoring Advocacy' that is available within 'WWF Resources for Implementing the WWF Project and Programme Standards' has a useful Appendix to this end (Appendix 3), which details some ideas on the kinds of information programmes could collect to monitor advocacy/influence (e.g. campaign leaflets; workshop attendee registers; press cuttings where WWF/partners are mentioned in relation to policy/practice issue) and how this information could be stored and organised (e.g. media file; activities and events file; watching brief file).

This is not intended to be the sole responsibility of one person, and would need all team members/partners (and communities and other beneficiaries where appropriate and practical) to take responsibility for monitoring and recording particular aspects. Where human, and indeed financial, resources are very limited a decision has to be made as to what is possible within the practical constraints faced by the programme. **Please note** however that it is not intended that every minute detail be recorded, focus should be on significant inputs and events. Also, as indicated earlier, it is important to be aware of what data gathering, monitoring and analysis is already being done by others (e.g. think tanks; CBOs) and link with and utilise this information where possible to maximise resources.

### **To be used in combination with other evidence/MoV**

The Level of Engagement Tool is not intended to be a standalone indication of the initial stages of the influencing process. As already mentioned, evidence will be required to be gathered to support this tool (e.g. anecdotal evidence from partners and target actors/organisations; surveys of stakeholders in the policy/practice area), the use of other tools/MoV and wider evaluation during programme implementation. It is important for example to monitor changes in the policy/practice context that may have caused changes in strategy and progress along the way (e.g. new CEO at targeted company or bank).

The scale used in the tool, even if used in conjunction with maximum participation, does by its nature include an element of subjectivity. The 'level' assigned therefore is a broad indication of progress and is to be used in conjunction with more detailed quantitative and qualitative evidence for evaluation purposes. In this respect, it also is important to note that the tool can only serve as a kind of '*proxy indicator*' for initial engagement/influencing by WWF/partners, and it is not intended that the outcomes in terms of 'getting attention and getting the issue on the table' are always deemed solely attributable to WWF/partners.

## Guidance on 'Moulding' at the Programme Level

Naturally, it will probably make sense to 'tweak' and adapt this tool in order to make it more programme and context specific, especially in terms of the specific programme indicator/s being measured. In that sense, anything within reason that helps the applicability of the tool at programme level is encouraged. However, it must be borne in mind that programme level information is required to feed back in and be aggregated meaningfully at portfolio level. Therefore, extreme care must be taken not to alter what is being measured beyond usefulness in terms of aggregation across the portfolio.

As a basic rule, the specific word descriptors being used are not so important, but the number of the level of engagement being referred to at the programme level must correspond with the type of engagement described for that number of level in the generic tool. If in doubt, please consult the PPA team and/or Design and Impact Advisers on any alterations to the tool design prior to utilisation.

## Capturing of the 'Process' in Policy/Practice Influencing and Making

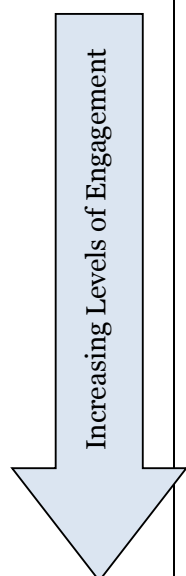
On piloting of this and the Commitment and Action tool with particular programmes, some of the feedback has been that the tools are too linear/sequential in nature, and that this does not reflect the true nature of policy/practice influencing and making processes (e.g. in terms of feedbacks and loops in such systems in reality). These tools are envisaged, as already indicated, to be used as one of a variety of means of evaluating influence on policy and practices. It may be that if a particular dialogue with key actors on policy/practice issue is stalled or stopped completely (e.g. due to a change in government), that the level of engagement would be lowered for that particular programme reporting period. Reflections on and reasons for this would be captured elsewhere in more detailed data recording and reporting. If WWF/partners were able to exert influence to re-start the engagement/dialogue (e.g. with incoming government officials/ministers), then the level would likely be raised for the next programme reporting period, and this would thus reflect the 'process' to some extent (again, in combination with more detailed data and report detail). The danger in adding too much detail to the tools in terms of feedback loops, etc. is that they would begin to become cumbersome/complicated to use, and aggregation would become challenging and risk losing meaning.

## Limitations of the Tool

The Level of Engagement tool (as with the Commitment to Action tool) has an inherent element of subjectivity, and also does not give a direct measure in all cases of only WWF-specific influencing impact: the engagement outcomes may be achieved through a variety of actors besides WWF/partners. Whilst it has been noted earlier that this is not the intention of the tool, the influence of other actors/organisations/networks outside of WWF/partners' sphere should be acknowledged as far as possible within detail provided in the programme database/records or relevant report. The element of subjectivity will be lowered if the tool is used in as participative a manner as possible, and key partners and other stakeholders/beneficiaries are involved as far as is practical and possible.

**Table 1: The Core ‘Level of Engagement’ Tool**

LEVEL	WWF/Partners Engagement in activities and dialogue concerning particular Policy or Practice Issues (‘Inputs’)	Evidence of Engagement Level – Responses and Results (‘Outputs’)
<b>0</b>	<b>Start of the Influencing Process</b>	<b>No tangible engagement with key partners or influential actors</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At ‘Point Zero’ as far as the influencing process goes; just beginning to initiate internal discussions regarding needs and forward plan.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No key partners or influential actors identified or engaged with, on a tangible or strategic basis, as yet</li> </ul>
<b>1</b>	<b>Defining the Agenda and Formulating a Plan*</b>	<b>Internal/key partner knowledge and awareness is raised. Opportunities to engage with key target actors and like-minded organisations being sought</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sensitisation/awareness-raising on relevant issues (e.g. need to include particular user groups in policy/practice formulation; need to mainstream climate change/resilience issues through particular sectoral policies, for example forestry or conservation policies);</li> <li>Desktop review of supporting research/policy analysis;</li> <li>Participatory appraisal of communities/groups/individuals in programme areas re. particular issues;</li> <li>In-house discussion/brainstorming/plan of action;</li> <li>Requesting meetings (e.g. with like-minded organizations; with key political actors); and</li> <li>Building relationships (e.g. attending events; networking).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Levels of awareness/knowledge within WWF and amongst key partners are increasing; and</li> <li>New relationships are being explored and forming (e.g. with like-minded organisations and with key political actors/organisations that WWF/partners wish to influence).</li> </ul>



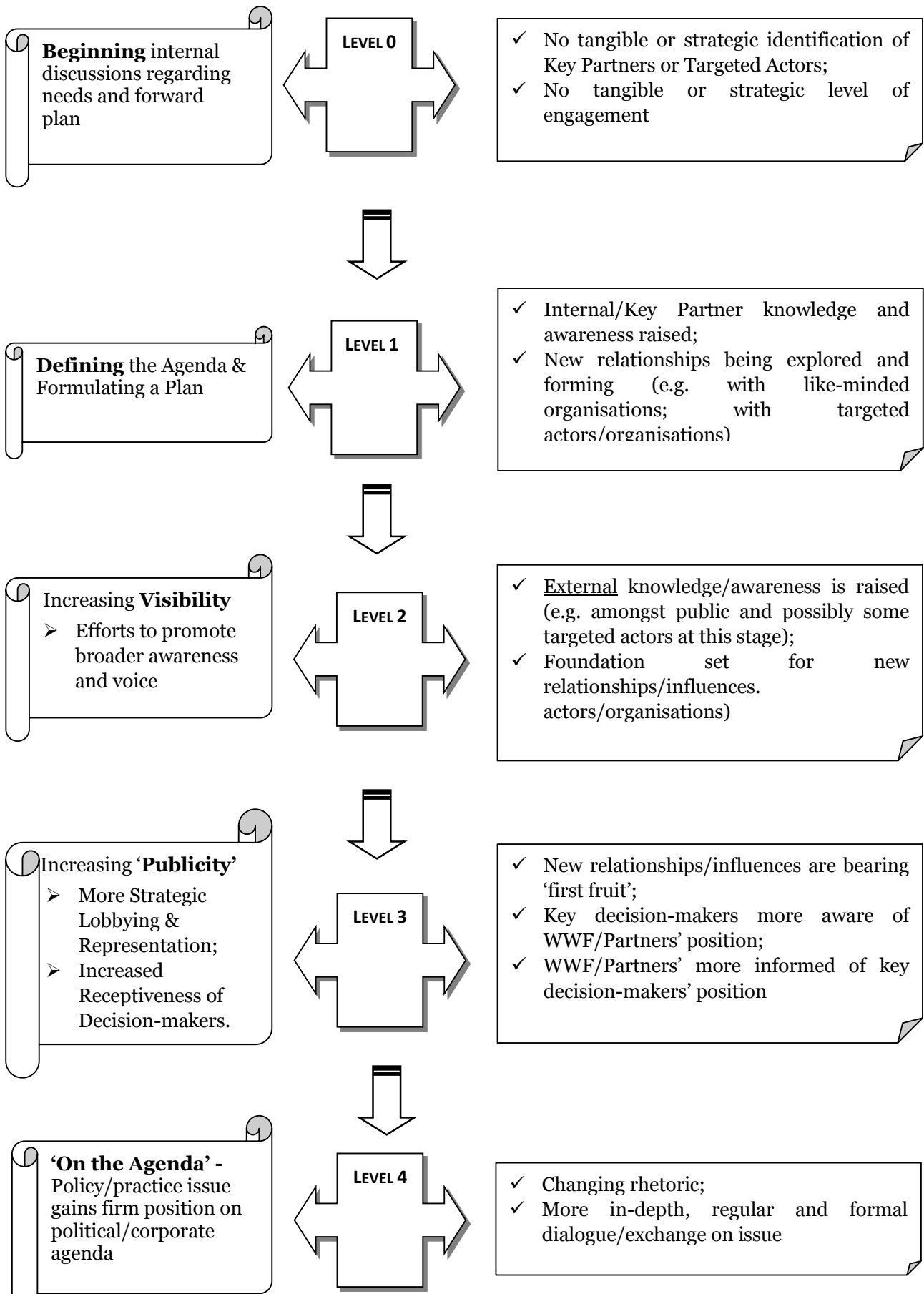
2	<b>Broader Awareness and Voice - Visibility</b>	<b>External knowledge/awareness is raised. Foundation set for new relationships and influences</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Larger scale consultation locally/regionally, including CBOs/CSOs/relevant NGOs</li> <li>• National level consultation (e.g. key political actors, larger NGOs/INGOs, Think Tanks, research institutes, national networks and coalitions);</li> <li>• Public Hearing, Public Auditing fora;</li> <li>• Commissioning and or using research/work at local level to raise awareness of issue and inform debate;</li> <li>• National awareness-raising campaigns; and</li> <li>• Citizens /constituents play an active and informed role in assessing issues and identifying strategies to address them which reflect the needs of different groups (such as women or youth), guided by for example a relevant CSO.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meetings/event attendance agreed with other like-minded organisations and/or key political actors/organisations;</li> <li>• Level of awareness of issue increased amongst networks and key political actors/organisations;</li> <li>• New networks and alliances may be forming;</li> <li>• Traditional relationships between opponents may be breaking down, pathways for renewed dialogue/compromises being opened;</li> <li>• Greater synergy of aims/activities between allies, and in terms of influencing and monitoring decision-makers (e.g. establishing a 'network agreement');</li> <li>• Changes in public behaviour, changes in public opinion, evidence of greater awareness on issue; and</li> <li>• Evidence of higher profile of issue in media, or change of media position and/or depth of coverage.</li> </ul>
3	<b>More Strategic Lobbying and Representation, Increased Receptiveness of Decision-makers - Publicity</b>	<b>New relationships/influences are bearing first fruit. Key decision-makers more aware of WWF/Partners' position. WWF/Partners more informed of key decision-makers' position (e.g. plans, constraints and procedures)</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sharing articles, lobby documents, research/case studies at key events, through campaigns, within working groups and meetings;</li> <li>• Evidence that key decision-makers are interested in consulting with WWF/partners re. particular</li> </ul>	<p>A more regular/permanent 'seat at the table' for WWF/partners (e.g. invitation to sit on panel/committee/working group; more frequent formal and informal consultations on the policy/practice issue);</p>



	<p>policy/practice issue on a more regular basis; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased sharing of information and plans by key decision-makers with WWF/partners and wider network.</li> </ul>	<p>Side events attendance;</p> <p>WWF/partner stance or research/case studies/campaign material being referenced in meetings or media; and</p> <p>WWF/partner knowledge of key decision-makers plans/viewpoints is enhanced and a revised strategy for engagement is put in place.</p>
<b>4</b>	<b>Policy/Practice Issue gains Firm Position on Political/Corporate Agenda</b>	<b>Changing rhetoric and deeper, more regular formal dialogue/exchange on issue</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Specific formal meeting scheduled to discuss issue in-depth;</li> <li>Issue referred to during key meetings/speeches, etc. on a regular basis, or given 'slot' on agenda for working groups or committees, etc; and</li> <li>WWF/partners requested to present particular information/evidence/case studies/research or to lead a particular meeting or event.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policy/practice issue entering everyday 'vocabulary' of key decision-makers, and is increasingly moving to being 'on the table' for solid discussion/debate towards tangible outcomes;</li> <li>WWF/partners having more regular, involved and formal debate on issue with key decision-makers;</li> <li>WWF/partners being specifically consulted on particular policy/practice aspects as a matter of course;</li> <li>Revised influencing strategy in place for going forward towards aim of improved policy/practice. Defined roles and responsibilities of WWF, partners and broader network/coalition members. Increased investment from allies, and possibly communities/local stakeholders, in terms of financial and technical resources; and</li> <li>Opponents of your position may have come out with a new strategy – this may be evidence that your advocacy work is having an effect.</li> </ul>

\* Likely to be predominantly at local level at this stage

**Diagram 1: Visual Summary of Level of Engagement Tool**



## Examples of Using the Tool To-Date

As mentioned earlier in this guidance note, only limited testing of and consultation on the tool has been done at programme level to-date. What feedback has been received has been integrated as far as possible into the core tool and guidance. Further testing by and general feedback/comments from the programme teams is of the utmost importance in terms of assessing: the usefulness of the tool in the programme context (e.g. easy to apply/mould?); any further amendments required to the core tool or guidance prior to further in-depth testing, and to obtain examples of use and 'moulding' of the tool in particular programme contexts.

### Feedback from Programme Team Managers

Feedback received via conference call with the Programme Team Managers on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2011 has been integrated into the core tool and guidance. In particular, a suggestion was made that a 'Level 0' of engagement be considered: to reflect the start or early stages of the influencing process. This was agreed to be sensible, and Level 0 now forms a core part of the tool. Teams may wish to add to or amend the generic descriptors against Level 0 to reflect what this truly means at the ground-level for their particular work areas/contexts in due course.

Overall, the tool and guidance were deemed to be useful, especially the visual summaries of the tool and the context in which it is to be applied (Diagram 2). The CEA Team is investigating alignment or integration of the tool with a 'Government Barometer' tool which they are working with at present.

### Feedback from the Adaptation Team

Again, the team found the tool and guidance useful, especially Diagram 2 illustrating the context in which the tool is to be applied. The point was made that for Adaptation Team purposes, the level of engagement would vary greatly over the project period and during milestones. As objectives are achieved and the policy/practice agenda advances forward, new partners and actors are identified and the process of engagement and influencing begins again with these new groups. It has already been outlined earlier in this guidance that the linear nature of the tool does not reflect the true nature of the influencing process, and that a variance or fluctuation in ratings would be expected during the course of a project due to alterations in external contexts or difficulties encountered. Overall, a positive trajectory when averaged out at the end of the project would be anticipated and targeted.

However, in the case of the Adaptation Team, the cyclical or 'looping' nature of their engagement strategy is actually a part of the original project plan or strategy to a significant extent, and this could therefore be built into milestones and targets to a degree (i.e. when Milestone 1 is achieved and Engagement Level 4 reached, it is anticipated that x new partners and/or actors will be identified for engagement, and therefore Engagement Levels would start at 0/1 for the next project phase). Also, in order to fairly reflect progress made over the course of the entire project, it may be appropriate to agree an averaging of levels of engagement reached with the whole spectrum of partners and targeted actors engaged with at various stages of the influencing process.

This may not just be appropriate to the Adaptation Team's work stream or context, and should be considered by other teams if/where relevant.

**Diagram 2: Overview of How to Use the Level of Engagement Tool**

